

of the Governor.

PRESIDENT: Senator Schmit, please.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, Mr. President, I don't suppose I have any reason to be any more optimistic that this body's interested in wastewater treatment than they are in storm sewer treatment in Papio...in the Papio Creek development. I just want to point out that it's kind of ironic the body has just voted against funding an existing program even though there is a more than 4 to 1 match involved, or approximately a 4 to 1 match of federal dollars, while we started off a whole new series of new programs this year. Now, the other day we enacted LB 311 by 25 votes and I raised the issue at that time as to whether or not it is wise to provide a new method of bond financing for wastewater treatment facilities, but my principle concern is the fact that a number of years ago the federal government gave considerable incentives to the wastewater treatment facility development of the various cities and provides substantial amounts of money in grants for that program. The state then added money to those programs so that the local community had a very small portion of responsibility. As the program became more and more expensive, the usual scenario took over. The federal government reduced substantially their portion of the contribution, the state followed suit, and we shoved more and more of the responsibility back to the local government. Now we are almost at the point where we're going to give the entire responsibility relative to financial cost to the local government. If we would provide this amount of money to the Department of Environmental Control, it would mean that at least for this year the state was going...would be willing to provide some assistance in the wastewater treatment facilities that would not be then necessary to be raised through bond financing. I believe I have said it many times on this floor, we like to stand here and take credit for those things that seem to be proper. This past session, the most popular by-word was the issue of property tax relief. There were a number of years when we handed out, over a period of years, more money for wastewater treatment than we are going to provide this year in property tax relief. At the present time, this is a very minuscule amount of money, but it is significant in that it does provide some indication to certain entities that the state does have some commitment to assist them. It's about 1.2 million, I believe, and I would just want to caution you that you are going to be approached, I'm sure in the future, from your own community relative to whose